

To: Faulk, Libby[Faulk.Libby@epa.gov]
From: Russo, Rebecca
Sent: Tue 8/11/2015 4:24:53 AM
Subject: FW: CBS This Morning Inquiry

I drafted this for release, which I agree should go out tonight if possible. Joan – is the highlighted area accurate? Will the water quality data fact sheet be released soon?

Hi all,

Please find below the following information, which we are preparing for a water quality data fact sheet, which we will be releasing soon.

EPA has compared the surface water quality data collected on August 5 and 6 to screening levels for human health developed by EPA. The screening levels for human incidental ingestion during recreation are based on an exposure duration totaling 60 days, 8 hours/day. The State of Colorado has developed screening levels for agricultural exposure. The screening levels for agricultural exposure are based on an exposure duration totaling 30 days.

Based on the data we have seen so far, EPA and ATSDR do not anticipate adverse health effects from exposure to the metals detected in the river water samples from skin contact or incidental (unintentional) ingestion. Similarly, the risk of adverse effects to livestock that may have been exposed to metals detected in river water samples from ingestion or skin contact is low. It is advisable to avoid areas with orange discoloration in the river water.

Although the pH levels between Cement Creek and Durango have returned to baseline levels washing with soap and water after contact with the river water is a sound public health practice to minimize exposure to the metals and bacteria that may be present in any untreated river water.

Rebecca A. Russo

Region 8 Congressional and Intergovernmental Liaison

Office: 303-312-6757

Cell: 303-204-1930

From: Card, Joan
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2015 9:15 PM
To: Russo, Rebecca
Cc: Gray, David
Subject: Re: CBS This Morning Inquiry

David, do you agree we should? I'd say so.

Joan Card

Senior Policy Advisor

Region 8

Sent from my EPA iPhone

On Aug 10, 2015, at 9:09 PM, Russo, Rebecca <Russo.Rebecca@epa.gov> wrote:

Am I doing this tonight?

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 10, 2015, at 8:09 PM, Card, Joan <Card.Joan@epa.gov> wrote:

We could issue it as a separate blast to the Congs to remedy that. Sorry for not catching that sooner.

Joan Card

Senior Policy Advisor

Region 8

Sent from my EPA iPhone

On Aug 10, 2015, at 8:06 PM, Card, Joan <Card.Joan@epa.gov> wrote:

+ David since this is new. We haven't given these details to Congs.

Joan Card

Senior Policy Advisor

Region 8

Sent from my EPA iPhone

On Aug 10, 2015, at 7:57 PM, Card, Joan <Card.Joan@epa.gov> wrote:

It's long but it is the whole story right now. Go for it.

Joan Card

Senior Policy Advisor

Region 8

Sent from my EPA iPhone

On Aug 10, 2015, at 7:53 PM, Mylott, Richard
<Mylott.Richard@epa.gov> wrote:

I can. Kelly, Joan?

From: Purchia, Liz
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2015 7:46 PM
To: Mylott, Richard; Smith, Paula; Zito, Kelly
Cc: Card, Joan
Subject: Re: CBS This Morning Inquiry

Should we add this from the water quality data fact sheet?

EPA has compared the surface water quality data collected on August 5 and 6 to screening levels for human health developed by EPA. The screening levels for human incidental ingestion during recreation are based on an exposure duration totaling 60 days, 8 hours/day. The State of Colorado has developed screening levels for agricultural exposure. The screening levels for agricultural exposure are based on an exposure duration totaling 30 days.

Based on the data we have seen so far, EPA and ATSDR do not anticipate adverse health effects from exposure to the metals detected in the river water samples from skin contact or incidental (unintentional) ingestion. Similarly, the risk of adverse effects to livestock that may have been exposed to metals detected in river water samples from ingestion or skin contact is low. It is advisable to avoid areas with orange discoloration in the river water.

Although the pH levels between Cement Creek and Durango have returned to baseline levels washing with soap and water after contact with the river water is a sound public health practice to minimize exposure to the metals and bacteria that may be present in any untreated river water.

From: Mylott, Richard
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2015 9:39 PM
To: Smith, Paula; Purchia, Liz; Zito, Kelly
Cc: Card, Joan
Subject: RE: CBS This Morning Inquiry

Draft responses to questions from CBS News This Morning.
Please review and provide any comments, suggestions.

Thx. Rich 303-312-6654

At this point how much waste water is coming out of the Gold King Mine?

The volume of water coming out of the Gold King mine today was about 800 gallons per minute. We expect some variation to continue over time. We have constructed four ponds at the mine site which are treating water by lowering acidity levels and removing dissolved metals. This system is discharging treated water to Cement Creek at levels cleaner (higher pH and lower levels of metals) than pre-event, background conditions in the creek. Over the next several days, EPA will make upgrades to the system to ensure its continued operation.

Where is the plume now? When do you anticipate it will reach Lake Powell?

Aerial and ground reconnaissance indicates that the plume associated with the Gold King Mine release has dissipated downstream and there is no leading edge of contamination visible in downstream sections of the San Juan River or Lake Powell. Ultimately, the water quality data we are collecting will define the plume.

Any more information on potential risk to human health?

EPA is collecting and assessing water quality from the Animas and San Juan Rivers daily. Over the next several days, we will be jointly evaluating data and information with partners to determine when access to the Animas River will be restored for activities and uses such as rafting, fishing, irrigation, and drinking water. EPA, tribal, state and local officials are coordinating these decisions based on sampling

data, risk screening levels, and other related factors. We do not anticipate any reopening decisions until at least August 17. The timing of these decisions could vary among local, state and tribal governments based on local conditions and by uses. Until notified otherwise, people should continue to abide by existing closures.

From: Smith, Paula
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2015 7:17 PM
To: Purchia, Liz; Zito, Kelly
Cc: Mylott, Richard
Subject: FW: CBS This Morning Inquiry

Yes.

- Paula

From: Purchia, Liz
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2015 6:43 PM
To: Zito, Kelly; Smith, Paula
Subject: Re: CBS This Morning Inquiry

Paula - Seems like you all have enough info to answer here.
Could you or Rich get back to her?

From: Zito, Kelly
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2015 8:22 PM
To: Purchia, Liz; Smith, Paula
Subject: Fwd: CBS This Morning Inquiry

I know you guys are swamped... Any chance you can send her the update soon? Will that answer her questions?

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Zuleta, Myra L" <ZuletaM@cbsnews.com>
Date: August 10, 2015 at 5:04:08 PM PDT
To: "Gray, David" <gray.david@epa.gov>, "Smith, Paula" <Smith.Paula@epa.gov>, "Zito, Kelly" <ZITO.KELLY@EPA.GOV>
Subject: RE: CBS This Morning Inquiry

Hi there,

Checking to see if someone will be able to get back to me tonight. This is for a piece we're working on for tomorrow morning.

Thank You

From: Gray, David [<mailto:gray.david@epa.gov>]
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2015 6:05 PM
To: Zuleta, Myra L; Smith, Paula; Zito, Kelly
Subject: RE: CBS This Morning Inquiry

Hi Myra,

Paula will get back with you on your questions since she is in Colorado.

David

From: Zuleta, Myra L [mailto:ZuletaM@cbsnews.com]
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2015 4:50 PM
To: Smith, Paula; Gray, David; Zito, Kelly
Subject: CBS This Morning Inquiry

Hi there,

I wanted to follow up with some questions I had after today's conference call....

At this point how much waste water is coming out of the Gold King Mine? I know yesterday it was around 500 gallons/minute. Is that still the same?

Where is the plume now? When do you anticipate it will reach Lake Powell?

Any more information on potential risk to human health?

Many thanks in advance,

Myra Zuleta

Producer

CBS This Morning

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